

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~23~~4, wherein the biomolecules are amine-functionalized or amine-containing biomolecules.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~19~~, wherein the oxide surface comprises a silicon oxide.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the oxide surface comprises silica, glass or quartz.
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~19~~, wherein the oxide surface comprises a metal oxide.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the metal oxide comprises a native oxide of stainless steel.
8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~19~~, wherein the plasma is formed from a source gas comprising water, oxygen or a mixture thereof.
9. (Previously Presented) A method of treating a surface of a substrate, the method comprising:
  - (a) forming hydroxyl groups on an oxide surface by exposing the oxide surface to a plasma;
  - (b) reacting epoxy groups on epihalohydrin molecules with the surface hydroxyl groups *in situ* in the absence of plasma and in the absence of acid and base catalysts to provide a functionalized surface; and
  - (c) exposing the functionalized surface to vacuum *in situ* to provide epoxy-terminated, surface-bound spacer chains.